

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CPR-02

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 SS-15 PRS-01 H-02 RSR-01 /050 W

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O 241020 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3374

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: JA, PFOR, US

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS UNOFFICIAL AND INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY FONMIN OHIRA FROM 1725 TO ?1740 ON TUESDAY APRIL 24 CONCERNING GOJ ANNOUNCEMENT ON POSSIBLE VISIT TO US BY EMPEROR AND EMPRESS IT PROVIDED EMBOFF BY AMKICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU, MOFA. END SUMMARY.

1. OHIRA OPENED PRESS CONFERENCE WITH BRIEF STATEMENT OF WHICH FOLLOWING IS GIST: PRESIDENT NIXON HAS EXPRESSED DESIRE THAT EMPEROR VISIT US THIS YEAR. HOWEVER, CIRCUMTANCES INCLUDING SCHEDULE OF IMPERIALHOUSEHOLD PRECLUDE VISIT THIS YEAR. I CONVEYED THIS INFORMATION TO AMERICAN AMBASSADOR THIS AFTERNOON AND ASKED THAT HE CONVEY IT TO HIS GOVERNMENT. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WELL UNDERSTOOD GOJ POSITION AND WOULD CONVEY IT TO HIS GOVERNMENT. I HAVE ALSO ASKED AMB. USHIBA IN WASHINGTON TO CONVEY THIS INFORMATION TOUSG. (END OF STATEMENT)

2. QUESTION: WILL INVITATION CONTINUE TO STAND FOR NEXT YEAR.
ANSWER: YES.

3. QUESTION: IS THERE ANY FURTHER STEP CONTEMPLATED BY WHICH GOJ WILL FURTHER EXPLAIN SITUATION TO USG. ANSWER: I PERSONALLY FEEL THAT PERHAPS I SHOULD VISIT US AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN FURTHER CIRCUMSTANCE WHICH PRECLUDE THEIR MAJESTIES'
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VISIT THIS YEAR, BUT IN VIEW OF MY SCHEDULED COMMITMENTS AND SITUATION IN DIET I AM STILL IN PROCESS OF CONSIDERING VISIT TO US AND HAVE NOT REACHED ANY DECISION.

4. TWO SIMILAR QUESTIONS: DOES FONMIN HOPE TO VISIT US ON RETURN FROM VISIT TO EUROPE, OR IS THERE LIKELIHOOD FONMIN WILL VISIT US EN ROUTE TO EUROPE. ANSWERS TO BOTH THESE QUESTIONS: ONLY NARROW MARGIN OF TIME EXISTS IN WHICH I COULD MAKE SUCH VISIT BUT I AM STILL CONSIDERING IDEA.

5. QUESTION: WHAT ARE ASPECTS RELATED TO IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULE? ANSWER: DEDICATION OF NEW SANCTUARY AT ISE SHRINE IN EARLY OCTOBER, NATIONAL ATHLETIC MEET IN CHIBA IN MID- OCTOER, FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY HARVEST FESTIVAL. (EMBASSY COMMENT: THIS WAS ONLY QUESTION AND ANSWER ON WHY VISIT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE THIS YEAR.)

6. QUESTION: WAS QUESTION OF PRIMIN' S VISIT TO US DISCUSSED DURING YOUR MEETING WITH AMERICAN AMBASSADOR. ANSWER: NO. ONLY QUESTION OF IMPERIAL VISIT WAS DISCUSSED, THOUGH AMBASSADOR DID TAKE OPPORTUNITY TO DELIVER LETTER FROM SECRETARY OF STATE ROGERS FORWARDING TO ME COPY OF FOREIGN POLICY REPORT.

7. QUESTION: HOW DO YOU SEE POLITICAL IMPACT OF THIS. ANSWER: IT IS HOPE OF GOJ THAT VISIT WILL BE REALIZED WITH BLESSING OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN AND IS CONSISTENTLY DEALING WITH THIS MATTER IN THAT SPIRIT.

8. QUESTION: HOW DOES EMPEROR FEEL ABOUT IT? ANSWER: I UNDERSTAND HIS MAJESTY VERY DEEPLY APPRECIATES PRESIDENT NIXON' S CORDIAL INVITATION AND IS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE VISIT BEING REALIZED, CIRCUMSTANCES PERMITTING.

9. QUESTION: WHAT ABOUT PRESIDENT NIXON' S VISIT TO JAPAN. ANSWER: WE UNDERSTAND THAT JAPAN IS INCLUDED AMONG COUNTRIES PRESIDENT IS PLANNING TO VISIT. WE HAVE NOT HAD SPECIFIC TALKS ON THIS MATTER. IF THERE IS SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FROM USG CONCERNING PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO JAPAN, WE WOULD WELCOME IT.

10. QUESTION: CAN THERE BE AN QTE EMPEROR SHOCK UNQTE IN US, FOR EXAMPLE IN US SENATE. ANSWER: QUESTION IS BEYOND MY ABILITY TO UNCLASSIFIED

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ANSWER.

11. EARLY EVENING TV NEWS (FOLLOWING ABOVE PRESS CONFERENCE) CARRIED KYODO REPORT FROM WASHINGTON THAT AMBASSADOR USHIBA CALLED ON SECY ROGERS APRIL 23, AND THAT FONMIN OHIRA MET WITH AMBASSADOR

INGERSOLL. THESE REPORTS ASSUMED THAT USG INFORMED THAT EMPEROR
UNABLE VISIT US THIS YEAR, AND NOTED THAT OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
WOULD PROBABLY BE MADE LATE TONIGHT.
INGERSOLL

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